

He was a young poet, the author of a volume of "Poemes Parisiens," to which he afterwards added "Les Eustiques" and "Les Lambrusques." He discharged his duties with the literary grace of a true Parnassian, and a mildness which arose from the circumstance that he was himself a native of Castel-Sarrasin. Gambetta deemed him altogether too mild. According to the Dictator, to ensure the return of a Republican in that constituency a strong-fisted sub-prefect was needed, a man, too, who could pen vigorous and stirring proclamations. Now it occurred to Cle'ment Laurier that Zola had a vigorous style and a stern mien, so why should not the novelist be set in the place of the poet, the latter being gently transferred to some other office? But Delthil would not consent to this arrangement. Having been born at Castel-Sarrasin, he gloried in ruling it.

According to the legend, he now threw off all his mildness, barricaded himself in his sub-prefecture, and defied both the Government and Zola, in such wise that the latter, although duly "gazetted," was unable to take possession of his post when he repaired to Castel-Sarrasin. But he never went there. The truth is that he had barely accepted the appointment when Paris capitulated, and Jules Simon arrived at Bordeaux to put an end to some of Gambetta's

high-handed proceedings. Forthwith, in
presence of the
general " muddle " which arose, and with the
thought, also,
that now communications with Paris were
restored, he
might revert to journalism, and ultimately to
literature,
Zola called on Laurier and withdrew his
acceptance of the
appointment.

It may be idle and unprofitable to speculate
concerning
"the might-have-been," yet a few remarks
may well be